

Mayor Charles "Skip" Lee called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, December 14, 2015. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Retha Elston, Joe Martin, Chris Schuchard, John Stauter, and Chris Wilen. Absent: Alderman Bob Conklin.

Also present were City Attorney Ron Coplan, City Manager Scott Shumard, Finance Director Cindy Von Holten, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Superintendent of Waste Water Treatment Scott Howard, Fire Chief Gary Cook, Deputy Fire Chief Mike Dettman, Police Chief Ron Potthoff, Police Lt. Tim Morgan, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There were no communications from Visitors.

Manager Shumard reported that Abiding Word Church has offered property they own at the northeast corner of Lynn Boulevard and Sixth Avenue to settle the debt owed the City. This property would give the Park District access to complete their path. The property is valued at \$65,000 and the debt outstanding is \$58,000. Because the land is worth more than the debt Abiding Word Church is planning to keep farm rental money for the next nine to ten years. Council members wanted to discourage the access onto Lynn Boulevard and negotiate the years that Abiding Word would receive farm rent.

Manager Shumard presented information:

- Loss in revenues from flat property taxes, slight state income tax increase, slight increase in sales tax over the last ten years, and franchise fees declining
- Expenses increase for pension funds, health insurance, liability/work comp insurance, and union contract increases
- Utility Tax may be applied to natural gas and electric bills
- Surrounding communities have used these utility taxes for sometime
- Existing service levels
- Examined potential cuts
- Strategic Plan Key Initiatives agreed upon by community, staff, and Council
  - Improved Perception of City and pride
  - City Services, Funding Project and Having Employees to Complete Them
  - Communication
- Departmental Presentations on cuts and impacts
  - Building Department
  - City Clerk
  - Finance

- Fire
- Police
- Public Works

Alderman Martin reported the dissatisfaction of citizens when there was a possibility of closing Fire Station 1 in 2009.

Mayor Lee stated Dispatch consolidation is in the future. Chief Potthoff does not see initial savings in the consolidation.

Superintendent Howard equivalent cutting personnel with cutting morale.

Alderman Stauter stated that he appreciated the information presented tonight because he wants to be able to defend the position that he takes on these tax increases.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:03 pm.

Marie Rombouts  
City Clerk